



King County



Customer Newsletter

July 2010

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DDES Customer Service Numbers

DDES General Customer Assistance

206-296-6600

Permit Application Appointments

206-296-6797

Billing Hotline

206-296-6659

DDES Records Center

206-296-6696

Media and Public Disclosure Inquiries

206-296-6682

DDES Director, John Starbard

206-296-6700

Building and Fire Svcs. Director, Jim Chan

206-296-6740

Permit Center, Jarrod Lewis

206-296-6713

Plan Review, Chris Ricketts

206-296-6750

Building Inspections, Bernard Moore

206-296-6762

Code Enforcement, Sheryl Lux (acting)

206-296-6680

Current Planning, Lisa Dinsmore

206-296-7171

Land Use Division Director, Randy Sandin

206-296-6778

Engineering, Molly Johnson

206-296-7178

Clearing & Grading, Steve Bottheim

206-296-7144

Critical Areas, Steve Bottheim

206-296-7144

Updating the Shoreline Master Program



King County is currently updating its Shoreline Master Program (SMP). The SMP applies to lakes over 20 acres, rivers with an average annual flow of more than 20-cubic-feet per second (cfs), and the marine shoreline around Vashon and Maury Islands. The program also applies to upland areas within 200 feet of the water's edge. The SMP has not been updated since 1977 and this update is required by state law. The County Council's Environment and Transportation Committee has been reviewing the proposal since March. The full Council will hold a public hearing on September 20, 2010, and is expected to vote on the update September 27, 2010.

The proposed changes to existing regulations primarily clarify existing law or address emerging issues. For example, the proposal includes additional policies and regulations directed at aquaculture. This industry did not exist to any significant degree in King County 30 years ago, but is becoming more common. In other cases, the proposal eliminates or streamlines review processes and modifies regulations that provide no environmental benefit. For example, overly restrictive standards that prohibit docks and floats on rural lakes have been relaxed to allow those shoreline property owners to have improved access to the water when it will not cause environmental damage.

Another major change concerns the Shoreline Environment Designations, which act like zoning overlay on the shoreline jurisdiction. King County's current SMP provides for only four shoreline environments. Since the 1977 SMP was adopted, however, King County has seen phenomenal population growth and changes in the shoreline. The proposed SMP updates the shoreline environment designations to take into account current conditions and proposes eight environments to establish designations more tailored to different types of shoreline.

All information including proposed policies, maps, and code language are available on the DDES Website at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/shorelines>. The King County Council also maintains information about the proposal, including directions on how to provide comments on the proposal, on its website at http://www.kingcounty.gov/council/issues/comprehensive_plan.aspx. **For additional information, please contact Harry Reinert, DDES Special Projects Manager at 206-296-7132.**

Burn ban is in effect for King County

A Phase 1 burn ban is currently in effect and will run through September 30, 2010. This burn ban applies in both the incorporated and unincorporated areas. For details, see <http://www.kingcounty.gov/property/FireMarshal/BurnBanInfo.aspx>.

Process Improvement Ordinance stresses efficiency and convenience for permit customers

Executive Constantine and DDES have transmitted to the King County Council a process improvement ordinance designed to streamline the review process for many permit types. The Council's Environment and Transportation Committee has been reviewing the proposal since spring and will hold a public hearing on the proposal on September 20, 2010. The full Council will vote on September 27, 2010. The proposed process improvements include the following:

Topic	Proposed Code Change in Process Improvement Ordinance
Critical Area Buffers	Currently, a new on-site septic system or well in a wetland or aquatic buffer requires an Alteration Exception Permit. The proposed ordinance would change this to allow an alteration as long as certain conditions are met. This change reduces both the cost and time period for securing a well or septic system permit on properties affected by critical area issues.
Temporary Uses	Currently, Temporary Use Permits are only valid for 180 days and may not be renewed. The proposed ordinance would make Temporary Use Permits valid for one year and allow annual renewals for up to five years. The renewal process would also be shorter and less expensive than the initial permit. This is particularly helpful to property owners in the rural area seeking to have special events such as weddings on their property.
Boundary Line Adjustments	A boundary-line adjustment that eliminates lot lines would become a minor adjustment. This will simplify the review process, reducing both permitting costs and review timeframes.
Pre-application Conferences	The information submitted by the property owner during a preapplication conference would be valid for one year, rather than the current 180 days. This proposal allows applicants additional time to apply for a permit following the preapplication conference.
21A.08.030, Residential Uses	The proposal would allow cottage housing as a permitted use in the R1-R8 zones with a preapplication community meeting. Cottage housing currently requires a Conditional Use Permit. The proposal also allows bed and breakfasts for more than five guests in the A zone as a permitted use under some circumstances. This is consistent with how bed and breakfasts are treated in the RA zone.
21A.08.060, Government/Business Services and Uses	The proposal would allow self-service storage as a permitted use in the R12-R48 zones when accessory to an apartment development of at least 12 units. This use currently requires a Conditional Use Permit.

The version of the ordinance recommended by the Executive is available online at: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/property/permits/codes/growth/CompPlan/2010.aspx>. The King County Council's Environment and Transportation Committee Chair's amended version, which will be taken up on July 27, 2010, is posted on this page: http://www.kingcounty.gov/council/issues/~media/Council/documents/CompPlan/2010_SMP/2010_0164substitute.ashx.

DDES inspects after hours and weekends for urgent environmental complaints

DDES staff remain on call 24 hours, 7-days per week to respond to the most serious environmental hazards. For environmental violations **happening now** that may pose a threat to public safety or cause irreparable environmental damage if not responded to by the next business day, citizens can call 1-888-437-4771.

The environmental hotline is monitored 24 hours, 7-days per week in order to provide a timely initial response for violations that occur outside of regular business hours or on weekends or holidays. Examples of calls appropriate for this number include major clearing without a permit or paint spills into a creek.

If our office is closed and the activity that you want to report may cause significant environmental damage or create a safety concern, do not hesitate to call 1-888-437-4771 immediately.